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JUNE 2020 | VOLUME 12 | ISSUE 6

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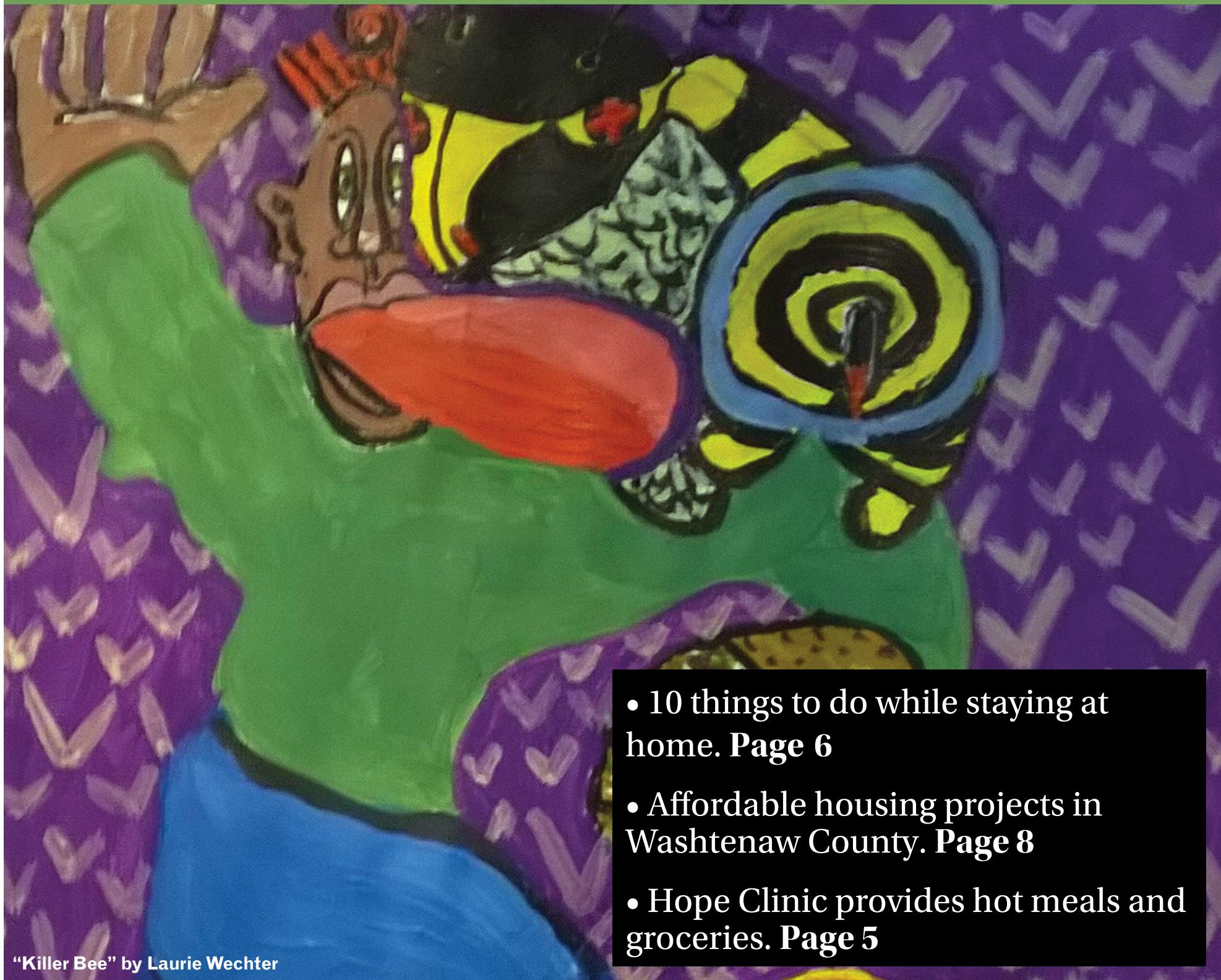
Coronavirus pandemic highlights  
deadly racial disparities. **Page 10**

MEET YOUR  
VENDOR: MORGAN  
SCHILLINGTON,  
PAGE 3



# GROUNDCOVER

NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP | WASHTENAW COUNTY, MICH.



- 10 things to do while staying at home. **Page 6**
- Affordable housing projects in Washtenaw County. **Page 8**
- Hope Clinic provides hot meals and groceries. **Page 5**

# Assessment of community need and response

*We don't talk about the issues of poverty the way that we should or as often as we should or as deeply as we should.*  
—U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown

The difficulties and frustrations of the months of April and May are easing for some and building for others. Many people have received their stimulus checks and/or unemployment payments and have some breathing room.

But many others have been stymied by the lack of access to computers and support systems. Several of the Groundcover vendors cannot get the up-to-date state IDs or driver's licenses they need to open a bank account for direct deposit of government assistance or stimulus checks. The IRS did not even start processing paper tax forms and stimulus checks until mid-May.

People who already had accounts set up with the state unemployment office but could not remember their login information had no one to turn to for help. Even in mid-May, the wait time on your assigned day to talk with someone by phone at the unemployment office was more than four hours. This became impossible for people who didn't have access to electricity so they could recharge their phones.

SOS reported that approximately 68% of the parents enrolled in their Ypsilanti housing and Parents as Teachers programs had lost their jobs due to the pandemic. Of these, only 12% were receiving unemployment checks by May 7. One of those parents had saved the money to open a nail salon and put down a deposit on a location just before the pandemic struck. It derailed her progress and that of so many others who strove to overcome their circumstances.

And those many people who have not yet successfully navigated the relief programs face even greater duress. They stressed over the



**SUSAN BECKETT**  
Publisher

eviction moratorium ending May 15 and worry that they may still be hamstrung when the extended moratorium expires on June 12. The moratorium on utility shut-offs ended June 1. The Salvation Army just opened an office at 3020 Packard to help with utility assistance. Thankfully, the free AT&T and Xfinity hotspots are being continued through June 30, essential since unemployment requires people to report every two weeks.

Thanks to a crew of committed and diverse volunteers, all willing Groundcover vendors who were selling in March now have working phones and phone plans, receive groceries each week and have filed for the stimulus check and other benefits for which they qualified. A volunteer calls them each week to check on them and see if they need assistance with anything.

Caseworkers at Delonis, each with a caseload of 25, have been working furiously, trying to help their expanded number of clients, spread out over three sites, get what they need, too. As the pandemic peaked, the Shelter Association operated five sites and managed to hold the number of COVID-19 cases to just a few. SOS caseworkers have been making sure that their clients have internet and phone service, and have been helping locate furniture for those moving into new quarters, while also running their food pantry that has seen a 30%

increase in demand.

Expanded rental assistance and affordable housing remain top priorities and need to be addressed in pandemic response legislation. According to the Center for Budget and Public Policy, 500,000 new vouchers are needed nationwide in order for everyone to maintain the recommended physical distancing.

The need for short-term emergency rental assistance is even more urgent. Of the 125 people in the Shelter Association sites, 20-30 only need help with move-in costs and debt assistance for utilities or past evictions to clear the way for a new rental. Without short-term assistance, more people who have been stalled by the system could have their lives turned upside down by eviction in June.

According to Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH), the last recovery bill (CARES Act) included partial forbearance on mortgages to protect homeowners from eviction. The next recovery bill must include protections for renters that allow recovery time for them to catch up on past-due rent payments. Emergency rental assistance — one-time payments to help renters blindsided by an emergency avoid eviction — is slated for \$100 billion in funding as part of the [Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions \(HEROES\) Act](#), a \$3 trillion relief bill to help the nation's continued response to the coronavirus pandemic. The bill was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives on May 18 but faces stiff opposition in the Senate. Washtenaw County recently received \$45,000 in Emergency Solution Grants to help with rapid re-housing and eviction prevention assistance through October. This part of the \$3.9 billion Michigan received from the CARES Act for pandemic response that has trickled down. County officials are using the \$45,000 for homelessness response

through October for short-term rental assistance and eviction protection. More is needed but at least this is a start.

While the pandemic has exposed a greater proportion of the population to the possibility of displacement, it has been an exacerbating side effect of poverty for decades that strains shelters, schools and social workers and often destroys families. Even in 2016, there were 93 evictions per day in Michigan. Subsidizing rent for several months while folks get back on their feet has repeatedly been shown to cost society less than it spends on the eviction and subsequent emergency services required to shelter them and get them into a new domicile.

## TAKE ACTION AT HOME!

Call the White House at 202-456-1111, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and your U.S. Senators at 202-456-1414 and ask them to support the HEROES Act and its nearly \$200 billion of funding to help communities address the needs of low-income renters, homeowners and people experiencing homelessness.

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## GROUNDCOVER

### Mission

Creating opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty.

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## MEET YOUR VENDOR



**Morgan Schillington**,  
vendor No. 148

### In one sentence, who are you?

A Groundcover vendor. I'm not where I want to be in life, but I don't blame anyone but myself. I'm not unhappy that I am not a millionaire.

### Where do you normally sell Groundcover?

In front of the People's Food Co-op.

### When and why did you start selling Groundcover?

In 2013, I wanted to get my grandson to be a Groundcover vendor. He didn't want to do it, but I have kept being a vendor.

### What's your favorite thing about selling Groundcover?

Meeting good people. It's helped me realize there are a lot of decent people — at least a few of them.

### What is a typical day like for you or something our readers should know about you?

I try to get things done right.

### What change would you like to see in Washtenaw County?

That property taxes and rent would go down.

### Is there anything else you'd like folks to know about you?

I like to help people that deserve to be helped.

## Positivity, forgiveness and love: keys to personal and global renaissance



**KEVIN SPANGLER**  
Groundcover Vendor No. 307

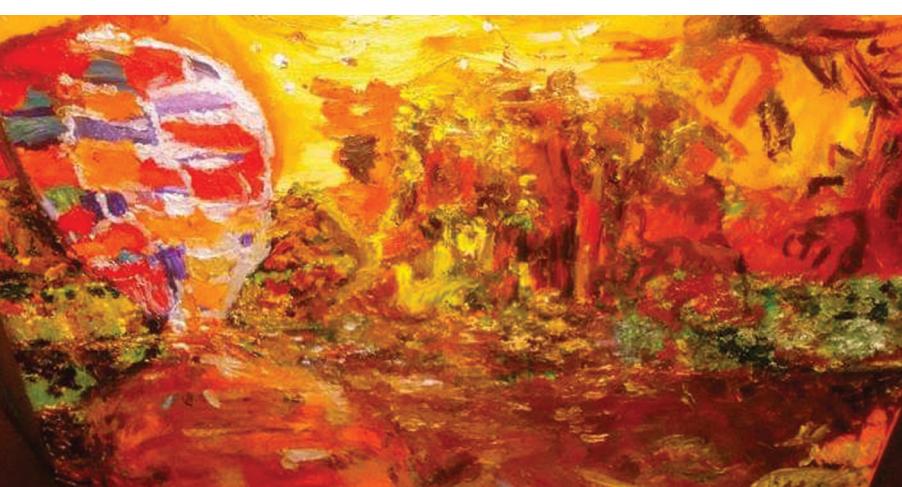
negative reality is. Then you can pull yourself and everyone up out of a negative paradigm because it takes a large amount of people visualizing positivity to change reality.

If you focus on a virus you get more virus. If you focus on a bad president you get more bad presidents. It is vital for you today in these times to forgive the virus, the president, your mother, your father, sister, brother, friend... anyone who has ever done you wrong. Forgive them, send them as much loving positive energy as possible... and go one step further and pray for their friends and family to be happy, healthy and wealthy. It is imperative that we do this so we can collectively shift and enter our new reality — a rebirth, a revitalizing recovering, a renaissance of life itself, based on the highest degree of mutual and far-reaching respect for all of life.

My partner Ariel and I are currently publishing the book "Rising Out of Depression and Going up the Royal Road," but we are doing it uniquely; we are initially publishing as a free magazine with 10,000 copies. The release date will be July 4, the seventh anniversary of Ariel's recovery date. We are selling advertising and taking donations to print the magazine. The name of the positive magazine is "Universal Voice."

I built a business to survive any economy and this is a year we will be able to shine. We have three new sponsors for the advertising trailers: Cookies, Gage and Sunnies. They are all cannabis dispensaries. This summer we will be driving these advertising trailers around the state. I will be reaching my goal of a base pay of \$2,500 a month for my drivers. It is amazing to see my business grow.

## Like a peace painting, Groundcover vendor #45 lives a colorful life



"Arizona Dream, Trump Rising" by Heather Feather was sent to White House as a Christmas gift for President Trump.

freedom when I moved in with my grandmother, H. Marie Coulter, a realtor. Shortly thereafter, I went to Texas and helped look after my baby cousins for a year. During that time, I also attended school and worked as a hostess. I always dressed and looked older than I was. Many famous people and movie stars came in but I talked to them like they were regular people.

When I returned, my womanly figure helped me land a job at the Brighton McDonald's. When I started driver's education, they

figured out how young I was, greatly reduced my hours and pay, and moved me from fry cook to bathroom cleanup duty. So I left and worked at VG's Grocery store on and off for many years, first bagging, then as a cashier and deli clerk. I still sometimes work at McDonald's restaurants, especially those around Cleveland, Ohio.

In 1991, I arranged a sober party for my Pinckney High School theater classmates at my

see HEATHER FEATHER page 9 ➤

# Being in relationship with coronavirus and what we can learn from language

**KEN PARKS**  
Groundcover vendor No. 490

We are using the Spanish word for *crown* to name the species of virus that is associated with a series of pandemics that began in 1918. Coronavirus was discovered as a species in the 1960s, and five new types have been identified since 2003. I am a curious person and the struggle to make sense of the world gets more complex despite my belief that a basic simplicity is the nature of reality. It is what it is. At the same time I am awestruck by the experience, ever so fleeting, that the whole is bigger than the sum of its parts.

Every one of us is exploring the unknown and trying to define it by the known. We really need a new language. The alienation of words and their meaning—the gap between the use of a word and its meaning—is inherent in all languages. English is so distant from the original oral culture that our inability to communicate looks like an internal Tower of Babel. Our colonized minds are at the end of the rope. Do you tie a knot or let go?

## Mental Health Millage grants awarded — four local agencies will receive millage contracts

### WASHTENAW HEALTH INITIATIVE

Four local agencies have been awarded millage contracts to enhance supportive housing for youth and adults with mental health and substance use concerns.

"One of the key recommendations made by Washtenaw County's Community Mental Health Advisory Committee was to invest millage revenue in supportive housing," said Trish Cortes, executive director of Washtenaw County Community Mental Health.

To achieve this objective, the Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development worked with CMH to solicit bids for three-year supportive housing projects in the areas of youth and adult crisis, prevention and stabilization. Eight proposals were submitted, and reviewed by the Community Mental Health Partnership of Southeast Michigan, the Corporation for Supportive Housing, the Washtenaw Housing Alliance and the Office of Community and Economic Development. The four

How many competing camps of understanding do we have around the word *liberal*?

Would poetic precision help us? The finger pointing at the moon is not the moon. Credit that to a Japanese Zen ancestor.

From beginningless time we have our earliest ancestors and our exalted ancestors. Respect for our ancestors is the beginning of our education. They also ventured into the void of unknowing and passed down their discoveries. We are bodies with sympathetic and parasympathetic systems. We are discovering our interrelatedness and the wisdom of the body, which is our best model if we listen, reflect and live wholeheartedly. The choice to be authentic is here now. Results are secondary to presence and process.

When we embody the best of our ancestors we learn to be more fully present and engaged in the struggle to benefit all beings without exception.

Who are our simplest ancestors? Indigenous teachings focus on all our relations. Current biological research points to cyanobacteria as the first life

forms: blue-green algae. It now looks like bacteria, virus and all life forms including human beings have a common ancestor. So the coronavirus is among our relations.

How do we communicate? The best understanding we have of communication is that it begins with respect and listening. Whatever context we are in, we communicate in an interrelated way with our environment. The coronavirus is a message from reality. It was born to this earth from an environment that is deeply impacted by human activity. As water, soil and air become commodified and polluted with a cocktail of chemicals that challenge the imagination, our own immune system has become deeply compromised. The coronavirus is a message to pay attention. Attention cannot be paid in money. Its common currency is awareness.

Our need for safety and acceptance work best when we breathe naturally. Inhale and exhale. Learn when a longer inhale works best and when a longer exhale opens reality for healing and creative expression. Exhale slowly so as to drop the fear and tune in to the wisdom

of the body. Walk and dance often. Ask for help when needed. You do it yourself but not alone.

YouTube has become a great teacher for me. Gabor Mate, Gordon Neufeld, Stephen Porges and Valarie Kaur are so inspiring, intelligent and kind that my gratitude has grown beyond measure. We are not defined by our past. We want to experience the view from *here*.

My first mentor was my high school science teacher, then the Germans who were in the resistance to fascism. Martin Luther King, Jr. mentored America. Cuba mentored us that the USA is the "other" America. Standing Rock mentored many of us that we live on Turtle Island and that America is a historical moment in the eye of the Creator. The Tibetan lamas are foremost of my mentors now. View every sentient being as your Mother.

Our crowning achievement will be when we learn to communicate with our own inner child, with all our relations and especially with the virus SARS-CoV-2. May we respect this by becoming healing beings for ourselves and others.

# Providing food and Hope

**EMMELINE WEINERT**  
Hope Food Program Manager

Over the last few weeks, you may have seen pictures from around the United States of mile-long lines of cars full of people waiting to pick up food. During the COVID-19 pandemic many people are experiencing food insecurity for the first time; for those who were struggling before, the problem has just gotten worse.

Fortunately, the Hope Clinic in Ypsilanti has been able to offer enough grocery pick-up times so that the line never stretches further than a few people down the sidewalk. And while the shelves of this local food pantry have been emptying much more quickly than usual, thanks to dedicated partners and generous community members, they've been quickly restocked.

Two weeks before the shelter-in-place order came from the state of Michigan, Hope Clinic staff started putting plans in place to rearrange all of Hope's food assistance programs. They replaced their weekly food pantry shopping appointments and farm stand produce pick-up with six days of walk-up grocery distribution, no appointment needed. The four weekly hot meals, which normally brought 60 guests a night into the Hope Clinic dining room, were replaced with carry-out meals, boxed up and handed out the door with a pump of hand sanitizer, a cup of coffee and a mask. "I never walk away hungry!" said Roger Thornberry, a client at Hope.

Hot meals are a vital component of addressing hunger. While meals haven't seen as dramatic a spike in attendance as groceries have, the need has been steadily rising. Families with access to a kitchen want groceries to prepare their own meals, but folks who struggle to cook healthy meals or are experiencing homelessness need those hot meals to get their daily calories.

"I love that it's easy to make good friends here. I've known some of these guys, and some of the volunteers, for years," said Don Wiseman, another Hope meal attendee.



**Roger Thornberry**

don't get to talk to anyone."

However, everyone at Hope agreed that guests' safety had to be the number-one priority, and they would need to find new ways to express love to the community. The decision to close the dining room was quickly validated, as in-person dining was shut down across the state.

Need for food in the community rose quickly as schools closed and people were laid off from their jobs. During a four-week period, Hope gave out 1,059 orders of groceries, more than triple what was given out at the same time last year. More than half of the people who received those groceries were new to Hope's services.

Hope has worked with community partners to provide continuity for those looking for food assistance. While smaller food pantries and meal programs have had to temporarily close their doors, Food Gatherers, Washtenaw County's food bank, has worked tirelessly to reallocate resources and ensure a steady supply of food to Hope Clinic and other partners. Hope has been working with Food Gatherers and St. Joe's hospital to get food to recovering COVID-19 patients. In coordination with the Ypsilanti Hunger Coalition, Hope added a Tuesday night meal, in addition to the existing Monday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday meals.

Melisa Tasker, program administrator, is overseeing the last few renovations and developing new safety procedures and protocols on behalf of Washtenaw County Community Mental Health. Resources from the county's Public Safety and Mental Health Preservation Millage have been used to renovate the county-owned building and to hire and train staff, including a medical assistant and peer support specialists who will oversee services in the facility 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

"It's a place where we can bring people to observe them for up to 23 hours so we can make a level of care decision — if they're safe to return to the community or if they need more care," said Tasker. "We can accommodate them here, in a less restrictive setting, instead of sending them home, to crisis residential services, or to the emergency department."

Peers like Campbell are a key element. "Many of the peers we've hired have provided direct care support — checking vitals and monitoring medication," said Tasker. "But they also have lived experience." Campbell, who worked as a peer support specialist with a supportive housing facility for years, said the benefit of peers is that they can relate.

Emergency rooms focus on treating acute issues, then moving patients on as quickly as possible. It's what they're supposed to do and they do a great job at it," said Lisa Gentz, millage program administrator. "But by bringing individuals here, we're giving them supported time to sort through all the issues that may be

groceries from Hope Clinic to bring to home-bound community members. Hope has partnered with Community Mental Health to provide groceries for their clients as well.

"This community is so supportive and agencies are working together in amazing ways," Weinert said. "We have been able to continually build capacity to meet the growing need." With a slow and staggered opening of the economy expected over the next few months, demand for food assistance is likely to remain high.

If you need food assistance, are interested in volunteering, or would like to make a donation to the Hope Clinic, you can visit [thehopeclinic.org](http://thehopeclinic.org).

underlying the crisis."

Jackie Campbell, one of the peer support specialists who will work in the facility, is excited to come in at ground level and is looking forward to greeting her first client. "I'll welcome them, see what immediate needs they have, get them comfortable, talk to them," said Campbell. "Just engage them really, let them know they're safe. Not by saying it, but in the action."

"Are you hungry? Are you tired? Do you need a shower? Clean clothes?" Gentz said these are the first orders of business.

"What we've been telling staff is that basic needs and a place to sleep is treatment," said Tasker. "A lot of times when we see people in the ER, psychosocial stressors are the biggest factor in why they're in. So we're going to help them sort out all of those stressors in a less restrictive environment that can meet their basic needs and give them a place to regroup."

Peers like Campbell are a key element.

"Many of the peers we've hired have provided direct care support — checking vitals and monitoring medication," said Tasker. "But they also have lived experience." Campbell, who worked as a peer support specialist with a supportive housing facility for years, said the benefit of peers is that they can relate.

"No one's life is the same, but if there's drugs, alcohol, mental health concerns, we've been there," said Campbell. "We can also be an example of how it can be overcome. You can get help and, you know, be able to function in life. Function and thrive."

see MILLAGE next page ➤

# 10 activities for COVID-19 times

**ANDRE VASHER**  
Groundcover contributor

By now most Ann Arborites are likely tired of sheltering, distancing and Zooming. Luckily our location offers resources to help us stay entertained during the coronavirus-driven sheltering protocol. Consider the following list to add zip to your daily routine. Or, if you already do some of these activities, try to include a variation.

**1 Write letters and emails.** Before you complain about the speed of mail today, think of writing to others as an experience with mutual benefits. You brighten the day of your reader by showing you're thinking of them, while at the same time getting out thoughts that might need releasing.

Not to get too therapeutic, but my daughter writes letters to people in government to show either support or frustration. Writing down her feelings became one of her coping mechanisms for dealing with COVID-19. At the same time, she's gotten quite good at supportive emails to family members, reminding them that even though she lives in Columbus, Ohio, she still cares. Her U-M alumni sisters and brothers question her choice of residence, but not her sincerity.

**2 Take advantage of the Ann Arbor Public Library.** Full confession here: I ignored emails from the [Ann Arbor Public Library](#) in the past unless I had a book coming due. Now I look forward to them. The depth of their content can surprise, with different hidden treasures appearing each week. Recently an Alfred Hitchcock expert presented a detailed podcast dissecting an early TV episode of "Alfred Hitchcock Presents."

COVID-19 sheltering creates time to explore previously unexplored gems like this.

Besides podcasts, the library offers games like Minecraft, trivia and a variation of their summer scavenger hunt called the Bummer Game. Ann Arbor resident and frequent library patron, Kate Brown Torrella, avidly takes advantage of the current virtual resources offered by our library, playing the Bummer Game for points and prizes like a pro. AADL also has daily TV programming: [youtube.com/user/AADLdotORG](https://www.youtube.com/user/AADLdotORG).

**3 Work out with the Y.** The [Ann Arbor Y](#) may be closed but manages to offer a wide range of exercise options online. Taped YouTube sessions are available with instruction in areas such as high-impact interval training and yoga for runners and cyclists. A visit to our Ann Arbor Y's website also provides options in kids' activities, karate and other fitness alternatives. These resources are available to everyone with an internet connection.

Previously, I only used the Y for swimming and elliptical workouts. I seldom paid much attention to the classes taking place on the second floor. Quarantine opened my eyes to new exercise options and the value of stretching.

**4 Schedule regular calls with those you care about.** Reach out to people you may have lost touch with and share your coping experiences. Zoom can make conversations fun with their use of "Hollywood Squares"-style presentation, but video is not required for meaningful dialogue. I call my sister who lives alone in Minneapolis on a regular basis, offering encouragement as best I can, since her work as a massage therapist came to an abrupt stop. She and I reconnect as we brainstorm how she can productively fill her time.

Movie nights with friends can become another regular event. Decide on a DVR or Netflix movie to view during the week then meet virtually on a weekend night to discuss the movie while debating the viewing selection for the coming week. We rediscovered the film "The Talented Mr. Ripley," realizing that movie viewing can include inexpensive gems from the past.

**5 Explore Ann Arbor on foot or bike.** With a stroke of good fortune, I got a bike just before the lockdown hit. Usually more of an indoor exerciser, I have discovered the joy of riding around town. It helps that traffic on the streets is lighter and the weather is getting warmer.

A friend introduced me to the [Border-to-Border Trail](#) as I expanded my pedaling past the city borders. I find the University of Michigan campus super-interesting and very bike-accessible.

No bike, no problem, as Ann Arbor offers a ton of interesting neighborhoods and parks to stroll through. Favorite walks include hiking up from the U-M hospital parking lot to Geddes Avenue in the Arb, Gallup park beside the Huron River, and window shopping on Main Street. Ann Arbor offers many options for those willing to get out for a stroll.

**6 Get creative with games.** With traditional pursuits like bowling and softball unavailable, competition remains. Online euchre allows folks to play virtual games with friends and family across time zones. One friend enjoys playing "Words with Friends" online with her daughter in Portland, Ore.

A family member recently challenged our extended family to trivia online across the country. She created her own questions, tailoring certain queries to local geographies. It was great fun for all. Other folks stuck inside find time to work on complicated crosswords, sudoku or intricate puzzles as team projects.

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# Art game to play at home

**LAURIE WECHTER**  
Groundcover contributor

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For the June issue, GCN's publisher, Susan Beckett, asked us writer-types to "dig deep into our creativity" and serve up something to do. Given the shelter-in-place fever, I offer up this little game. It does not need to be something that you play together, unless you plan it that way. As you will see, the steps can be done without a group, but it's a lot more fun and interactive to play via phone or computer. Try and start a group text for this sole purpose.

Our daughter struggles with worry regarding current events. I sent her a laugh of the day during the first two weeks of lockdown. Her brothers chipped in, forwarding any Buckeye jokes they could find.

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- I agree not to sell additional goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling with only one paper.
- I will wear and display my badge when selling papers and refrain from wearing it or other Groundcover gear when engaged in other activities.
- I will only purchase the paper from Groundcover News Staff and will not sell to or buy papers from other Groundcover News vendors, especially vendors who have been suspended or terminated.
- I agree to treat all customers, staff and other vendors respectfully. I will not "hard sell," threaten, harass or pressure customers, staff, or other vendors verbally or physically.
- I will not sell Groundcover News under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- I understand that I am not a legal employee of Groundcover News but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.
- I understand that my badge is property of Groundcover News and will not deface it. I will present my badge when purchasing the papers.
- I agree to stay off private property when selling Groundcover News.
- I understand to refrain from selling on public buses, federal property or stores unless there is permission from the owner.
- I agree to stay at least one block away from another vendor. I will also abide by the Vendor corner policy.



# Affordable housing projects underway will meet 10% of Washtenaw's need

SUSAN BECKETT

Analysis done by the Michigan State Innovation Model Using data from the Homeless Management Information System shows that over the next 10 years, Washtenaw County will likely need at least an additional 1,552 units of affordable housing to meet the projected need. The people in nearly half of these units will also need support services to successfully maintain housing.

With a significant majority of citizens favoring intervention to address the affordable housing deficit, it is now receiving attention at all levels of government.

Through the work of area agencies, substantial progress was achieved from 2015-2019, despite the loss of 991 affordable housing units that returned to market rates:

- 27% reduction in total persons who were homeless;
- 85% reduction in unsheltered (street) homelessness;
- 36% reduction in the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness; and
- 61% reduction in veteran homelessness.

## Affordable housing projects under construction

Agencies of the Washtenaw Housing Alliance currently have 100 units under construction or in the pipeline.

Twenty-eight public housing units were demolished at the intersection of State/White and Henry streets and are being replaced with 32 new apartments (23 one-bedroom, 9 two-bedroom) and a community center. Avalon will provide on-site support services. All 10 of the first-floor units will be handicap accessible.

Four public housing units and a market-rate duplex were demolished on the 3400 block of Platt Road and are being replaced with 32 new apartments (eight one-bedroom, 12 two-bedroom, six three-bedroom, two four-bedroom and four five-bedroom). The Ann Arbor Housing Commission, along with the agencies of WHA, will provide on-site services. The apartments should be inhabitable between September and December 2020.

Hickory Way, an Avalon development on S. Maple Road, will ultimately boast 70 apartments, 34 of which were slated for occupants in 2020, before construction was halted due to the pandemic. That first building will house one-bedroom, one-bathroom units, with a

community space for meetings, laundry and computer access. 17 units will be "supportive housing" for people making 30% of the area median income or less (\$19,500 for a single person), four units will go to people making 50% AMI or less (\$32,550 for a single person) and 13 units will go to people making 60% AMI or less (\$39,050 for a single person).

Residents will spend no more than 30% of their monthly income on rent. "Supportive housing" is for people who have been chronically homeless, and Avalon will coordinate additional support services for those residents.

## In the pipeline

The Veridian at County Farm project on a nearly 14-acre parcel at 2270 Platt Road is set to include 149 residential units—99 mixed-income market-rate units, to be developed by THRIVE on the southern portion of the land and 50 affordable housing units, 30 of which will be supportive housing to be built by Avalon Housing on the northern portion. Though submitted as separate plans, the goal is to have the two portions make up one cohesive energy-efficient neighborhood.

The apartments being built in the Michigan Theater building fronting W. Washington Street will include 19 units of permanent supporting housing.

## Supportive services

There will likely be a Housing and Services millage on the November 2020 ballot, at the discretion of City Council. That millage would go a long way toward providing the supportive services funding necessary to keep the most vulnerable people safely housed and out of emergency facilities. Those services range from helping with assistance paperwork to medication reminders, and are often referred to as case management.

Consider a mother with 10 children who couldn't get to a doctor's appointment because she had no one to look after her children while she was gone. Packard Health now does house calls for the mother. Her use of emergency services for a year fell from 17 times per year to only eight. This was funded through a now-finished 18-month State Innovation Model program grant for frequent utilizers of emergency services. Another beneficiary of that program was a man who had been camping for six years. He was uncomfortable engaging with people and consequently often not enrolled in Medicaid. He developed throat abscesses and hepatitis C. Due to the outreach component of the program, he was treated with primary care. His emergency services use fell from 11 times per year to once in four months.

# Smoking the brochure?

JERRY CHARBONNEAU  
Groundcover contributor

My last article on affordable housing in Groundcover was rather optimistic. I concluded from the City Council meeting in early March that proposed affordable housing projects were making headway. However, all the proposed projects seemed to disappear from visibility.

What is behind this mysterious disappearance? Let's focus in on City Council members in Ann Arbor who seem to be playing the "now you see it, now you don't" game." I watched the May 18 virtual City Council meeting. One of the agenda items was a resolution to take back millage money allocated for Affordable Housing and I thought it might be a clue to the projects' slow-down. A take away from this meeting is that we need a coalition of the many advocate groups to be a watchdog, keeping the pressure up and carefully screening Council candidates for their support of these projects. The advocacy committee for the

Washtenaw Housing Alliance is postured to perform this function. Their members, under the leadership of Amanda Carlisle, confronted City Council about the resolution. The resolution was vetoed by Mayor Taylor but at a price for Carlisle who was heavily criticized at the meeting.

"On the various properties we are trying to move forward, no matter what process we go through, the end goal is to get eight votes on City Council to approve the site plan," said Ann Arbor Housing Commission Director Jennifer Hall. "The intended purpose of community engagement is to ensure that eight city council members, and preferably all city council members, will feel support from the community to approve these developments that will include affordable housing." The following is an update on the proposed Affordable Housing projects, provided by Hall. I thank her for taking the time to update us. Now we need to do our part and help push the projects through.

"We (AAHC) took three resolutions in

April to Council, instead of in March. Two passed. Council approved pre-entitlement for 350 S 5th, and the DDA is discussing funding the pre-entitlement at its June 3rd meeting when it adopts a budget for FY21.

We previously proposed community engagement for 721 N Main & Ashley/William parking lot and we added in 353 S Main, as well as 121 E Catherine, to do all four sites together, and the DDA approved funding that process, which includes a downtown parking study and a downtown market study. The parking study and market study will need to be delayed at least six months to see what the impact of the pandemic is on the downtown. The Catherine site was added into this community engagement process due to a significant amount of complaints from some local businesses around Kerrytown and some local residents who did not feel that the impact of losing the parking on E Catherine was considered sufficiently when council approved moving forward with the

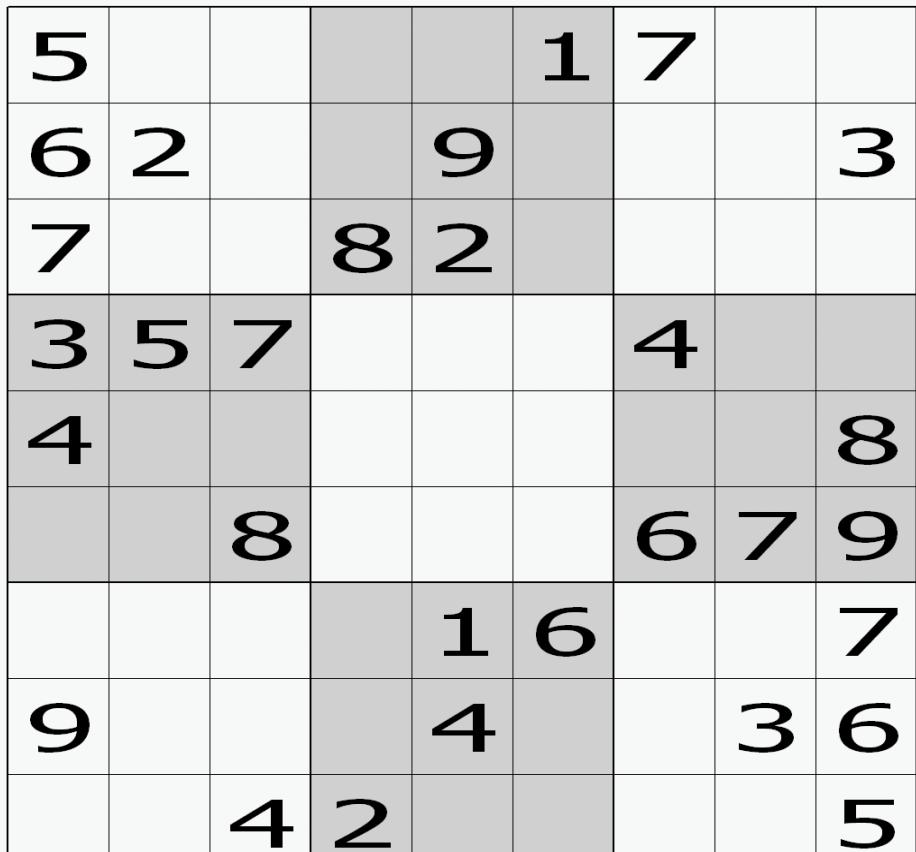
development process. Please remember that council has not approved a site plan, which is the most important part of the process. We could spend several years and hundreds of thousands of dollars on the building design and site plan approval process and if we do not have eight votes on council, then it will have been a lost opportunity.

We did not add 404 N Ashley to the attached community engagement process because we do not know when the University of Michigan Dental Clinic will be moving out. They have an option to extend their lease, and there is no point in starting the building design and site plan approval process until we have a firm date from U-M.

415 W Washington was not approved by city council. City Council directed staff to do more community engagement with adjacent neighbors and the Treeline Conservancy [regarding its use as a greenway anchor park] and then bring the

see HOUSING page 10 ▶

## Sudoku ★★★★ 4puz.com



Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

► HEATHER FEATHER from page 3

grandmother's home. At a regular dance held that same night, a boy died from an alcohol-related accident. I worked very hard in school and earned a varsity letter for Thespian/Dramatic Arts. I managed to graduate high school in Howell, Mich. in 2002 and then became a certified cosmetologist. My favorite job was as a hairstylist instructor at Howell Cosmetology College.

From 2006-2012, I worked at my mother and step-father's Multistate Transmission shop in Livonia, even running it myself when they went on vacation. I also was a 48-state truck driver. Just down the road from my parents' shop was Joe's Comedy Club in Livonia where I performed standup. I also performed at Allstar Comedy Club in Allen Park, Mich.

Jay Leno mentioned me twice in his jokes on The Tonight Show. The first time he related the story that Robert Patrick (the actor who played Liquid Man in "Terminator 2") told him about me. I was then known as Heather Conklin, and I was a teenage hostess at Chili's in Houston, Texas during the Waco standoff. Patrick was amused by me and even gave me a rose he folded from a paper napkin when he left. The other time Leno mentioned me I was known as Heather McCreadie and worked hauling freight. I tried to drive a semi-truck under a train bridge in New York City and got stuck there for five hours, as reported by the Riverdale, N.Y. newspaper. Can you hear Leno

reading that? I was once introduced at the Ann Arbor Comedy Club as the world's drunkest comedienne. These days I am fully active in AA programs and living life fully on life's terms. On Lincoln's birthday, in Louisville, Ky., I married another truck driver, Ron G. Carter from St. Clair Shores, Mich. We purchased a truck from J.B. Hunt. After I got sick and was hospitalized for a few days, we had to change companies and went to Try Hours out of Maumee, Ohio. Ron Carter was a major gambler who racked up so much debt at a tribal casino that they took our truck as payment and we had to walk for three days to get back to Ohio. That was the end of that marriage!

I started working for a man I call "Tom Tereck the crackhead terrorist."

My belief is that he played a major

part in the murder of his brother-in-law, army scientist Bruce Edwards Ivins, who was accused of sending anthrax through the mail. Tereck lost more than eight trucks due in part to his cocaine use. Through Tereck I met a man, who I call Wallie, an executive at Continental Airlines. Tereck told crazy stories of Wallie living in hiding with Tereck's mother.

Wallie was wanted by the federal judicial system for sending over a half-million dollars overseas to terrorists after using it as the basis for buying houses with mortgages. Wanting to investigate Wallie further, I worked with a resource in Ann Arbor to have Wallie named as my payee. I got him pinned to a payee money trail from Western Union to overseas,

ACROSS  
1. Taunt  
5. Big name in chainsaws  
10. "Smooth Operator" singer  
14. Skin care brand  
15. They might be dropped  
16. 1998 Sarah  
McLachlan ballad  
17. Olympus dweller  
18. Kylo Ren portrayer in the "Star Wars" sequel trilogy  
20. Path to enlightenment  
21. Facility  
22. Foot, for one  
23. Sturm \_\_\_ Drang  
24. Shoe part  
25. Takes effect  
27. Take hold of  
29. "Check that off the list!"  
30. Once around a track  
31. Longtime color TV brand  
32. Hence  
33. Ozymandias portrayer in "The Watchmen"  
36. Plains people  
38. "Where \_\_\_ my manners?"  
39. 106, to Caesar  
40. Zoo employees  
42. '90's sitcom set in Seattle  
46. Crack, as a cryptogram  
47. "Yay!" in a text message  
48. Mrs., in Marseille  
49. Blue shade  
50. Part of a flying V  
51. Wrestling match ender  
52. "Ghosts of Mississippi" Oscar nominee  
54. Thorn in the side  
55. Eisner successor at Disney  
56. Half-pipe trick  
57. "Break \_\_\_!"  
58. Hair care applications  
59. Iced  
60. Bridge, for instance

33. Cigarette ad mascot in sunglasses, once  
34. "Doubtfire"  
35. Egg-shaped  
36. Gave the thumbs-up  
37. Between 12 and 20  
41. Haagen-Dazs alternative  
42. Gourmet, slangily  
43. Chevrolet model on-and-off since 1958  
44. "8 Mile" star  
45. Back out of a deal  
47. "A Room of One's Own" author  
50. With 54-Down, where to find the items at the ends of 18-, 33-, and 52-Across  
52. Lively dance  
53. Seek to win over  
54. See 50-Down

DOWN

1. Enliven
2. Skin-care brand



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—MICAH 6:8

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where the Feds are now investigating further.

In 2006, I worked for Werner Enterprises of Omaha, Neb., where C. Werner enrolled me in a Homeland Security class, a credential I needed to be bonded for some of my trucking runs. I was awarded my Homeland Security card in the name of Heather June McCreadie.

Today I am known as Heather Feather, Groundcover Vendor #45. I

am a Peace Painter from Ann Arbor and sign my work with a feather emblem and the name June. President Donald Trump has one of my peace paintings, called "Arizona Dream Trump Rising." My life goals are to have world peace and to have one of my works of art in the home of every world leader — two for Queen Elizabeth.

# Coronavirus pandemic highlights deadly racial health disparities

*"We've seen heartbreaking stories come out of Detroit. Many have lost their parents, and children, and friends, and neighbors. Michiganders need leaders who are going to do everything they can to lower their risk of catching this virus, no matter their community, their race, or socio-economic status."* — Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer



**WILL SHAKESPEARE**  
Groundcover vendor No. 258

Some writers and radio/TV talking heads have said that COVID-19 is the great equalizer because it can infect people of all races. However, it is obvious that COVID-19 has become the great magnifier of long-term racial health disparities in our society.

Public concerns and consternation about the virus' disproportionate impacts led Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer to issue an executive order on April 20 establishing a new Michigan Coronavirus Task Force on Racial Disparities. The task force's mandate, according to Detroit Free Press writer Kristen Jordan Chamus, is "to address the way COVID-19 has disproportionately sickened and killed African Americans in the state of Michigan." Chamus cited an April statistic showing African Americans, while making up less than 14% of Michigan's total population, represented 40% of the state's COVID-19 deaths. Similarly, in Washtenaw County, African Americans represent a little over 20% of the county's population, but more than 40% of the deaths from COVID-19. Zip codes 48197 and 48198 in Ypsilanti were the hardest-hit areas in Washtenaw.

As Whitmer pointed out, beyond the statistics on racial and ethnic differences, the fatalities represent the faces of our elderly parents, neighbors, co-workers, friends and relatives. The Detroit Free Press also alluded to the Governor's quote on coronavirus and racial inequity during a news conference in which she said, "The deep inequities people in communities of color face, like basic lack of access to

health care or transportation or protections in the workplace, have made them more susceptible to COVID-19."

Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist is leading the Governor's task force. The group immediately decided to dedicate and "devote their work to the memory of a 5-year-old Detroit girl named Skylar Herbert who died from COVID-19. Skylar's family lives in the 48219 zip code, which is the second most impacted zip code, with 559 positive cases of COVID-19 as of [April 20]," according to the Detroit Free Press. Lt. Governor Gilchrist continued, "Zip code 48219 is a predominantly black neighborhood. [Skylar Herbert] is the daughter of two first responders in the City of Detroit. After she was admitted to the hospital, she developed a very rare complication that led to swelling of her brain and a lesion in her frontal lobe."

"She is nearly the same age as my twin son and daughter," Gilchrist said. "Her story cuts right to the core of why we must act now, why it's important to follow the orders and maintain social distancing because you can carry the virus and spread it without knowing it. It's also impossible to predict how the virus will interact with a person's body. We have to be careful."

The work of the Governor's Coronavirus Task Force on Racial Disparities continues. Every week, new data is released on how the virus impacts all communities, including African Americans.

For people of color in Michigan and

across our nation, one story resembles a Shakespearian drama. It is the story of an Inkster couple, David and Charlunda. The couple was infected by coronavirus in March and unable to see each other for 45 days. In a May 12 update, Chamus described how David (42, a middle school math teacher) and his wife Charlunda (45, a hospice nurse) fought to stay alive after contracting COVID-19. Some of their symptoms were similar to the ones outlined by the CDC — cough, shortness of breath, fever and chills, muscle pain, sore throat, and so on.

The Inkster couple told Chamus that "[they] knew COVID-19 had them in its clutches, but neither realized just how hard the virus would hold them in its grip." They were lucky to have a relative who is a medical doctor — Dr. TaLawnda Bragg of Spectrum Health in Grand Rapids. Both David and Charlunda have serious underlying pre-existing conditions.

David told the reporter that he felt terrible and didn't think he would survive. When the ambulance crew from Grand Rapids found him at his home, he was unresponsive. Charlunda, who was admitted to Beaumont hospital in Dearborn, told the reporter that her stomach churned, and she had lost her sense of smell and taste. David was taken by EMS ambulance to Grand Rapids for his COVID-19 hospitalization and recovery. Over 45 days their health gradually improved, and they are now reunited with a positive prognosis.

What we know is that African Americans and Latinos are contracting COVID-19 at higher rates than people of other races. They are also dying at higher rates. The news media, including the online social networks, have called attention to what is happening in Detroit, New York City, Seattle, New Orleans, Baltimore, Chicago, Miami, Dallas and other metropolitan areas and urban counties where the black population has a significant presence.

There are helpful strategies that the federal, state and local governments can take to achieve equity and equal access to healthcare in our society. The governor's task force is a good first step.

Since 2018, the Washtenaw County government has taken up a sustainable equity initiative in order to narrow the health and socio-economic gaps between Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor. After seeing the preponderance of COVID-19 cases in Ypsilanti zip codes, Washtenaw County provided free pop-up testing in the 48197 and 48198 zip code areas starting mid-May.

Let's hope improvements will not be too slow. We must face these despicable racial health disparities and COVID-19 challenges with a sense of urgency.

For generations, African Americans and Latinos have not had equal access to affordable healthcare. Important health needs are postponed when poor families are faced with tough decisions about postponing important medical treatment so that rent, mortgage or

pre-entitlement process for 415 W. Washington and 350 S. 5th. If the site plan is approved by City Council, both sites will require the AAHC to partner with a private developer, just like we have on all our public housing redevelopment sites because the developer will need to guarantee construction and construction financing. In addition, these two sites are only feasible if there is market rate housing included, unless a significant amount

of grant-type funding becomes available to subsidize these properties. The city may end up selling the properties to the developer in partnership with the AAHC or the city may end up ground-leasing the properties. In either case, the city will place deed restrictions on the properties, to ensure that long-term public purposes are met, whether that is affordable housing or preservation of the chimney swift habitat.

► HOUSING from page 8

resolution back to Council. Staff is doing more community engagement right now, but it is all through video and audio due to the pandemic. Staff will bring the resolution back in June or July and report the results of the additional community engagement back to Council.

The Ann Arbor Housing Commission will be the petitioner for the

# Firsthand account of the COVID-19 impact in prison

**AARON ST. GERMAIN**  
Prison correspondent

- No visitors are being allowed in.

COVID-19 has a long reach. We in prison may be secluded from the world, but the guards who go home every night are not. Can we take a moment of silence for those who have passed?

You see the numbers on the news, but what you don't see are the prison numbers. As of April 14, over 300 inmates in the Michigan Department of Corrections system have tested positive for COVID-19. It has killed 10 inmates and two staff members.

The State has taken great measures to make sure that we in prison are safe as well.

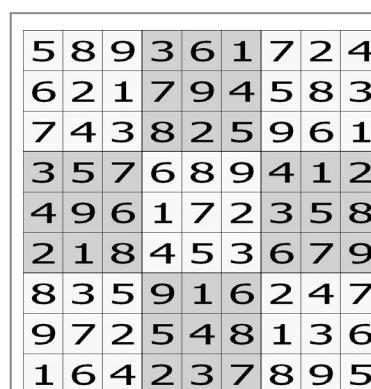
- The State has provided every inmate and staff member with protective masks that are to be worn at all times.

To help with distancing, over 700 inmates were released in the first week after Gov. Gretchen Whitmer declared the stay-at-home order. Many more have since gone home.

- All social activities, such as sports, weight pits and music groups have been suspended.

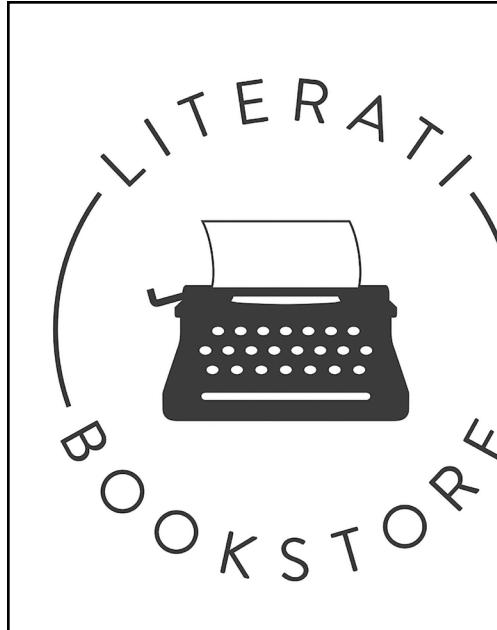
- We now sit in the chow hall two at a table, which usually seats up to four.

## PUZZLE SOLUTIONS



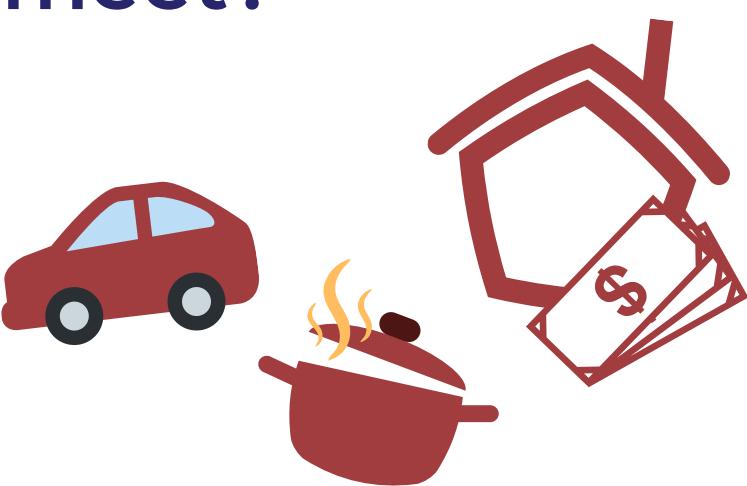
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## Is COVID-19 making it hard to make ends meet?

If you're struggling to keep up with rent, mortgage, or utilities payments, or need help paying for food, childcare, or gas for your car the **Barrier Buster Network** is here to support you.



Visit [Washtenaw.org/2818](http://Washtenaw.org/2818) or contact one of these Barrier Busters agencies to help you pay your bills as soon as possible:

**Housing Access for Washtenaw County**  
Phone: 734.961.1999  
Website: [housingaccess.net](http://housingaccess.net)

**SOS Community Services**  
Phone: 734.484.5411  
Website: [www.soscs.org](http://www.soscs.org)

**Washtenaw Health Plan**  
Phone: 734.544.3030  
Website: [www.washtenaw.org/WHP](http://www.washtenaw.org/WHP)

**Jewish Family Services**  
Phone: 734.769.0209  
Website: [jfsann Arbor.org](http://jfsann Arbor.org)

# Easy Rhubarb Sauce

**ELIZABETH BAUMAN**  
Groundcover contributor

1/3 cup sugar  
1/4 cup water  
2-1/4 cups sliced fresh or frozen rhubarb  
Cinnamon or vanilla (optional)  
Pound cake or vanilla ice cream

In a small saucepan, bring sugar and water to a boil. Add rhubarb; cook and stir over medium heat for 10 minutes or until rhubarb is tender and mixture is slightly thickened. Remove from the heat; stir in a dash of cinnamon or vanilla if desired.



Serve warm or chilled over pound cake or ice cream. Some love it on toast or an English muffin.



**A PLACE FOR ALL**

When you join the Y, you're committing to more than simply becoming healthier. You are supporting the values and programs that strengthen your community. At the Y, children learn what they can achieve, families spend quality time together and we all build relationships that deepen our sense of belonging. Financial assistance available.

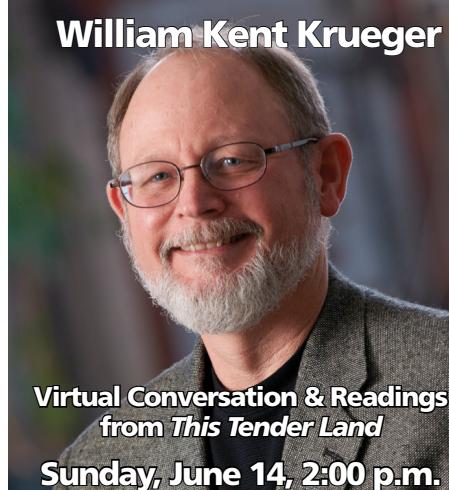
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**FIRST**  
**PRESBYTERIAN**  
Ann Arbor | Michigan

**Sunday Worship**  
9:30 am - YouTube & Facebook  
11:00 am - WAAM 1600 AM Radio

**Taizé Prayer Service**  
Tuesday, June 2, 7:00 p.m.  
YouTube & Facebook



[www.firstpresbyterian.org](http://www.firstpresbyterian.org)



**St. Francis invites you to join in Mass by LiveStream:**

Spanish: [stfrancisa2.com/misa](http://stfrancisa2.com/misa)  
English: [stfrancisa2.com/mass](http://stfrancisa2.com/mass)

**Regular Mass Times**  
Mon-Thurs 9:15am

Fri 8:15am

Sat 5pm  
7pm (Spanish)

Sun 10:30am

During the LiveStream mass, make a spiritual communion by praying this or a similar prayer:

*My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unit myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.*

**Bethlehem United Church of Christ**  
*whoever you are, and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here*

423 S. Fourth Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48104 734-665-6149  
[Bethlehem-ucc.org](http://Bethlehem-ucc.org)  [facebook.com/bethlehemuccA2](http://facebook.com/bethlehemuccA2)

Bethlehem Church is home of the Groundcover office



## JUNE 2020 EVENTS AT BETHLEHEM

Bethlehem has cancelled all in-person activities due to COVID-19. Here are ways you can experience our 10 am worship service on Sundays:

Most Simple - Tune in to our live radio broadcast on WAAM 1600AM.

You can also listen to WAAM on Tune In by following this

link : <http://www.mainstreamnetwork.com/listen/player.asp?station=waam-am&listen=Listen+Live>.

(Click the shiny "play" button on the lower left of the page, ignoring any advertisements.)

• Facebook

Beginning at 9:55 Sunday, you will find our Live Video at Bethlehem's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/bethlehemuccA2>

• Following the service

As always, you can listen to the podcast of our service following worship at the Bethlehem website. [https://bethlehem-ucc.org/](http://bethlehem-ucc.org/) (direct link: <http://bethlehemucc.podhoster.com/>)

Thank you all. We look forward to worshiping together.



## Sunday Worship Times

10:00 am Sanctuary  
streamed on Facebook  
11:15 am Virtual Connect  
w/ Ms. Kelsey and Pastor  
Lily via ZOOM

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